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ABSTRACT

This book addresses the role that rural schools can play in promoting community and developing a community-oriented world view. Specifically, this book suggests that rural schools, through concerted pedagogical and curricular attention to the dynamics of their particular place, can rekindle community allegiance and can nurture the fulfillment that one finds in meeting community obligations. Part 1, "The Creation of Community from a Historical Perspective," examines the ideas upon which community was built in the past. The chapters in this section propose that intradependence, cyclic time, and the avoidance of risk--three agrarian communal characteristics--were once a vital part of the health and well-being of communities; that these characteristics, though in severe decline, still linger in rural portions of the United States; and that the decline of these characteristics has coincided with the rise of an industrial world view encompassing notions about the self, the economy, the proper role of government, and the role of education as training for successful competition in a global economy. Part 2, "Public Policy and the Subordination of Community," chronicles historical developments that undermined community elements and bolstered cultural infatuation with the individual. In this section of the book, rural history represents an American tragedy perpetrated by urban commercialist interests under the guise of "progress," resulting in the decline of rural communities. Part 3, "Education and the Renewal of Community," addresses the simultaneous renewal of rural schools and communities based on rebuilding rural communities on an educational rather than an economic foundation. The chapters in this section provide examples of ways that this renewal process can be initiated in both the community and schools. Contains references in chapter notes and an index. (LP)

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